

## IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ON NARRATIVE TEXT THROUGH STORY PYRAMID STRATEGY

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**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab masalah mengenai apakah strategi piramida cerita meningkatkan kemampuan membaca dalam menemukan informasi nyata dan terperinci dan memahami tata bahasa dalam teks naratif di kelas X SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak. Penulis menggunakan penelitian tindakan kelas. Alat yang di gunakan dalam pengumpulan data adalah tes tertulis, field notes dan observation checklist. Pada siklus pertama, penulis menggunakan strategi piramida cerita sebagai strategi untuk meningkatkan kemampuan pemahaman membaca dalam menemukan informasi nyata dan terperinci dan memahami tata bahasa dalam teks naratif. Penulis menggunakan media gambar dan table sebagai strategi pembantu dan nilai rata-rata siswa adalah 45. Pada siklus kedua penulis menggunakan strategi piramida cerita di bantu oleh questioning dan guided question dan nilai rata-rata siswa pada siklus ini adalah 67.1. Penulis menggunakan strategi piramida cerita pada siklus ini di bantu oleh media gambar, guided question dan jumble word pada siklus terakhir dan nilai rata-rata siswa pada sisklus ini adalah 79.8.

**Kata kunci :** teks naratif, strategi piramida cerita

**Abstract:** This research is intended to answer the problem about how does story pyramid improve reading comprehension on finding out factual or detail information and understanding language feature on narrative text to the tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak. The writer has conducted a classroom action research. The tools of data collection used written test, field note and observation checklist. On the first cycle the writer used story pyramid strategy as a strategy to improve the students reading comprehension on finding out the factual or detail information and understanding language feature on narrative text. The writer used picture and table as helping strategy in this cycle and the students' mean score was 45. In the second cycle the writer used story pyramid strategy helped by questioning and guided question and students' mean score was 67.1. The writer used story pyramid strategy helped by picture, guided question and jumble word in third cycle and the students' mean score in this cycle was 79.8.

**Keyword:** narrative text, story pyramid strategy

**R**eading is one of four language skills which need to be mastered by students. As one of the language skills, reading can not be separated from other language skills because reading itself is supported by other language skills.

In senior high school curriculum, reading is one of the competences taught to the students. In KTSP curriculum, one of the reading competences which should be learnt by the tenth grade students is to comprehend the meaning of short functional text and essay in the form of narrative text, descriptive and news item in the context of daily life activities and to access knowledge. In addition, the questions of National Examination (UN) in English subject contain those kinds of texts and the students are asked to comprehend them. One of the kinds of text is narrative text.

According to Michigan's Genre Project (2004:3): "Narration is the act of telling a sequence of events, often but not always, in chronological order. It is a story, whether in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say and do. Narration can be fact or fiction. Some narrations report or are historical while others are creative and imaginative."

According to Klingner et al (2007:8): "reading comprehension is a multi component, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables related to the text itself (interest in text, understanding of text types)."

From that statement, the writer assumed that reading comprehension is the strategic process of making connection between ideas in the text and ideas in the readers' mind. It means that, when students read the text they try to make connection between ideas in the text and their previous knowledge.

Before conducting this research, the writer found problem that the tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak got difficulty in understanding the text, especially in finding out the factual or detail information of the orientation, complication, resolution and understanding language feature of narrative text. Because of that they could not answer the questions based on the text. It also could be seen when the teacher asked them about the factual or detail information of the text they kept silent. Student just read but they could not understand what they had read. Because of that, a teacher should use the appropriate technique, media, strategy and method of teaching reading comprehension so that they able to comprehend the text.

Story pyramid is one of strategies of graphic organizer that the writer had used to teach reading comprehension. In this research story pyramid has proved that students showed their critical thinking. According to Macon et al (1991) story pyramid helps students pinpoint highlight of a story and describe the important parts of using a limited number of words. The requirement of brief responses stretches students' thinking and is fun. By using story pyramid the description of important

information from a story, such as the main character, the setting, and the major events in the plot can be comprehended.

Narrative text is a collection of written words that seeks to entertain, display knowledge or skill, teach, organize, and plan behaviors, most frequently involving imaginative stories with setting, character, and plot (Beach, 2003). According to Jane Elliott (1997: xvi) Narratives (stories) in the human sciences should be defined provisionally as discourses with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people's experiences of it.

According to Michigan's Genre Project (2004:3): " Narration is the act of telling a sequence of events, often, but not always, in chronological order. It is a story, whether in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say and do. Narration can be fact or fiction. Some narrations report or are historical while others are creative and imaginative. Imaginary narratives typically impart some sort of truth to the reader. Whether factual or imaginary, the narrative can begin from the start and work its way to the conclusion, or it can begin in the middle of the action, and then recount earlier events through the character's dialogue, memories, or flashbacks. Poetry, which is categorized as a narrative genre, is an exception to the expected story form of narrative text."

According to two important references above, the writer concluded that narrative text is to entertain the readers by the story with problematic event. It can be sad or happy ending.

There are many ways to teach narrative reading, especially reading comprehension. One of the ways is by using graphic organizer. According to Max Thompson(2004:3), Graphic organizers help students comprehend information through visual representation of concepts, ideas, and relationships, graphic organizers turn abstract concepts into concrete visual representations, then the teacher selects a graphic organizer that facilitates that type of thinking and the use of graphic organizers produces learning effects that are substantial and long lasting.

The example of graphic organizer: KWL, word map, frayer diagram, fish bone, flow chart, web diagram, story map, story star, prediction tree model, story pyramid etc. Story pyramid is one of strategies of graphic organizer that the writer used to teach reading comprehension. In this research story pyramid has been proved that students showed their critical thinking. By using story pyramid the description of important information from a story, such as the main character, the setting, and the major events in the plot can be comprehended.

In this research, the writer used story pyramid strategy to teach narrative reading. The writer thought that story pyramid is one of the suitable strategies to

teaching reading comprehension. Story pyramid is one of the strategies to help the students comprehend the text. Macon et al (1991) stated that a story pyramid helps students pinpoint highlight of a story and describe the important parts of using a limited number of words. The requirement of brief responses stretches students' thinking and is fun. Use a story pyramid to describe important information from a story, such as the main character, the setting, and the major events in the plot. Carefully choose the words in order to provide a precise description. The students may wish to use a dictionary and a thesaurus. Here are the directions for writing a story pyramid:

**Capitalize the first word in each line.**

- Line 1 — stating the name of main character
- Line 2 — two words, describing the main character
- Line 3 — three words, describing the setting
- Line 4 — four words, stating the problem
- Line 5 — five words, describing one event
- Line 6 — six words, describing a second event
- Line 7 — seven words, describing third event
- Line 8 — eight words, stating the solution to the problem

The procedures of using story pyramid strategy in teaching narrative reading:

- 1) Teacher told the students that they are going to discuss about narrative text.
- 2) Teacher explained how to use story pyramid and give a model to the students.
- 3) Teacher delivered a story and a story pyramid worksheet to the students.
- 4) Teacher asked the students to read the story carefully.
- 5) The students read the story carefully.
- 6) The students read the information requested in the worksheet.
- 7) The student began fill in the story pyramid. First line, the students write the name of main character of the story.
- 8) Second line, the students wrote two words describing main character.
- 9) Third line, the students wrote three words describing the setting.
- 10) Fourth line, the students wrote four words stating the problem.
- 11) Fifth line, the students wrote five words describing one event.
- 12) Sixth line, the students wrote six words describing a second event.
- 13) Seventh line, the students wrote seven words describing third event.
- 14) Eight line, the students wrote stating the solution to the problem.
- 15) After finished fill in the story pyramid, they collected it.
- 16) Teacher and students discussed difficult words in the story.

## METHOD

In this research, the writer used classroom action research where the writer paid more attention to improving students' comprehension of narrative text during teaching learning process. Action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using technique of research. Classroom Action Research activities involve repeated cycles, each consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The result of one cycle is used to determine the need for the following cycle, until the problems get solved by the strategy (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

Classroom Action Research was done by teachers in their own classrooms. As English teachers, they had to solve their classroom problems or improve the quality of their classroom practices to result in better English achievement of their students. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) cited in Latief (2009), who are major authors in this field. Action research typically involves four broad phases in a cycle of research. The first cycle may become a continuing, or iterative, spiral of cycles which recur until the action researcher had achieved the purpose of this research, the cycle just stop.

The tools of data collection were written test, field note and observation checklist. Field notes were used to describe the activities in every meeting. The notes particularly covered the activities. Observation checklist was a form of table that consist the action applied by the writer to watch the object carefully in order to notice the atmosphere of the class. Checklist table collected the data in students' action when they did the activity in every meeting or cycle. The writer then concluded whether they were well motivated or not.

The subject of this research was the tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak class C in academic year 2011/2012. There were 30 students in this class. This class had been the subject of research because the writer found some problems faced by the students in comprehending narrative text. The students got difficulties in understanding the text, especially in finding out the factual or detail information of the orientation, complication, resolution and understanding language features of narrative text.

## RESULT

The research findings are discussed based on the result of research. The descriptions are as follow:

In general, story pyramid strategy had improved students' reading comprehension on finding out factual or detail information and understanding

language features on narrative text to the tenth grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak in academic year 2011/2012. It can be seen from the result of every cycle that the students improved in understanding narrative text. From the first cycle, the students' mean score was 45, the second cycle was 67.1 and the last cycle was 79.8.

In the first cycle, the actions that the teacher used in teaching learning process are as follows:

a) Picture

Firstly in whilst-activity, the teacher showed the students a picture. The teacher tried to get the students basic knowledge by the picture. The teacher asked them related to the picture and where the story in the picture came from. After that, the teacher gave them a text about the legend of Ruai Bird, and then the teacher asked them to guess what kind of text the story belongs to.

b) Table

After looking at the picture, the teacher delivered the material. Then, the teacher divided the class into groups' discussion; each group consisted of 5 students. The students were asked by the teacher to look and comprehend the generic structure from that story in group. Then, the teacher gave them a table. The teacher asked the students to read the story. They had to find out the factual or detail information from orientation, complication and resolution from the story. Students had to write down the information from the story in the table. Both the teacher and the students discussed the result of group discussion about the legend of Ruai Bird. Both the teacher and the students made story pyramid from the story. The story was the legend of Ruai Bird.

c) Story pyramid strategy

Every cycle of this research used story pyramid strategy to help the students comprehended the text. After they read the text, they tried to fill in the story pyramid.

To know whether they understood about the story, the teacher gave a story about the crying stone individually. After doing the exercise, they collected it. After collecting the students' answer sheet, both teacher and collaborator work together to computed individual students' score to obtain the students' mean score of every part of generic structure of the story. The mean score of orientation is 16.8, complication is 20.5 and resolution is 7.5.

The students score in the first cycle were categorized into poor with the qualification was **45 %**. It is indicated that the students comprehension in narrative text was low. Besides, they were lacked vocabulary mastery. The students' score could not reach the standard of succeed point because the standard of success point in

that school was **65**. That was why the researcher and the collaborator had to think the better preparation for the second cycle.

In the second cycle, the actions that the teacher used was story pyramid to improve students reading comprehension:

a) Questioning

In the second cycle, the teacher used questioning and guided question as strategies to help story pyramid strategy improve students' reading comprehension. Firstly, the teacher gave the students a story. The story was Malin Kundang. The teacher asked the students questions related to the title of the story and where the story comes from.

b) Guided question

After questioning session, the teacher asked the students to read the text about Malin Kundang. Both the teacher and the students discussed about Malin Kundang and asked the students filling in the story pyramid by guided question on the blackboard one by one. After completed the story pyramid on the black board, they discussed it together. Then, the teacher gave them an exercise (the legend of river wire). They filled in the story pyramid by guided questions.

c) Story pyramid strategy

After they read the text, the students tried to fill in the story pyramid. The students tried to fill in the story pyramid helped by guided question.

From the students' score in the second cycle, the teacher was satisfied because the students' mean score of orientation, complication and resolution had improved. The students' mean score of orientation in this cycle was 20.8, complication was 35.5 and resolution was 11. In this part, most of the students could fill in the story pyramid of orientation (number 1-3) correctly. The resolution part filled by them almost correct. But complication part still needs to improve. Many students still could not fill in the story pyramid of complication correctly. So, the teacher had to make better preparation for the next cycle. The next cycle, she used picture, questioning, guided question and jumbled word.

The students in this cycle were categorized into average to good with the qualification **67.1%**. It indicated that the students' comprehension had progress. The students' score could reach the standard of succeed point **65**. But complication part still needed to be improved. Still many students could not fill in the story pyramid of complication correctly. So, the teacher had to make better preparation for the next cycle. The next cycle, she used picture, questioning, guided question and jumble word.



In the third cycle, the actions that teacher used was story pyramid to improve students reading comprehension:

Based on the reflection in the second cycle, the writer found some students made mistakes on fill in the story pyramid by limited number of words. That was why the writer had to make better preparation for the next cycle. The preparations were lesson plan, field note, observation checklist, a technique that used by the teacher to help the students fill in the story pyramid (picture, questioning, guided questions and jumble words). The objective of the third cycle was the students were able to find out the factual or detail information of resolution on narrative text through story pyramid strategy and understand language features from narrative text.

a) Picture

In this cycle, the writer showed a picture and the teacher asked some questions related to the picture and where the story in the picture came from. The students were so active and interested in answering the teachers' questions about the picture.

b) Guided question

After that, the teacher delivered the material about narrative text, generic structures and language features of narrative text. Some students listened to the teacher's explanation but other still liked to talk each other so make noisy but the teacher try to get the students' attention by saying "HELLO" loudly. After she got the students' attention, she continued explain the material. After that, she divided the story about Timun Mas and asked the student to read the story then choosed some of them to fill in the story pyramid on the blackboard one by one. Actually they could fill in the story pyramid but the answer was still uncompleted. That was why the teacher helped them to fill in the story pyramid by guided questions and jumble words.

c) Jumble word

After completing the story pyramid on the black board, the teacher gave them an exercise (the legend Landak River). In this time, most of students did not get confused to fill in the story pyramid because had been explained clearly and gave the example how to fill in the story pyramid in the blackboard. They filled in the story pyramid by guided questions and jumble words strategy.

1. Farmer
2. simply - helpful
3. a - village - in
4. thief - statue – hedgehog - stole



5. golden - found – a – hedgehog – statue
6. they – very – rich – and – helpful – became
7. the – statue – stole – thief – farmers’ – house - from
8. the - thief – drowned – was – in – the – river – hedgehog

d) Story pyramid strategy

After reading the text, the students filled in the story pyramid. The students filled in the story pyramid helped by guided question and jumble word. After finishing the exercise, the teacher asked to the students to find out the difficult words of the story and discuss the words together with the teacher. The teacher gave the change to them to ask about the teachers’ explanation that they did not understand yet. In this last cycle, teaching learning process ran well and they seemed more interested and enthusiastic.

The teacher ended the class by concluded the material together with the students. The teacher also asked the students’ difficulty during today teaching learning process and gave moral values based on the lesson today.

From the students’ score in the third cycle, the teacher was satisfied because the students’ mean score of orientation, complication and resolution had improved. The students’ mean score of orientation in this cycle was 22.5, complication was 45.5 and resolution was 13.3. In this part, most of students could fill in the story pyramid of orientation, complication and resolution correctly. They also could fill the story pyramid by limited number of words.

The students in this cycle were categorized into average to good with the qualification **79.8 %**. It indicated that the students’ comprehension had some progress. The students’ score could reach the standard of succeed point because the standard of success point in that school is **65**.

In this stage, the writer and collaborator concluded that the third cycle was successful. The students’ mean score was improved. The important thing that the problems happened in the second cycle had been able to be minimized in the last cycle. Also the teaching learning process in the last cycle was better than the first and the second cycle. It meant that the cycle could be stopped.

## DISCUSSION

In this research, the writer used classroom action research. This classroom action research conducted on three cycles. Each cycle consisted of planning stage,

acting stage, observing stage and reflecting stage. From the research findings, it could be seen that the students' reading comprehension increased. In the first cycle, the main score of students were 45; in the second cycle were 67.1 and in the third cycle were 79.8. The improvement which was taken place in the classroom considered as the result of treatment. The treatment which mentioned here used story pyramid strategy in improving students' reading comprehension. The use of story pyramid strategy could improve the students' reading comprehension on narrative text of the tenth grade students' of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak in academic year 2011/2012.

From the above description it showed that encouraging students to comprehend the reading text through story pyramid strategy was able to improve the students reading comprehension where the students could fill the story pyramid correctly. This strategy also could help students to use their critical thinking by filling in the story pyramid with limited number of words.

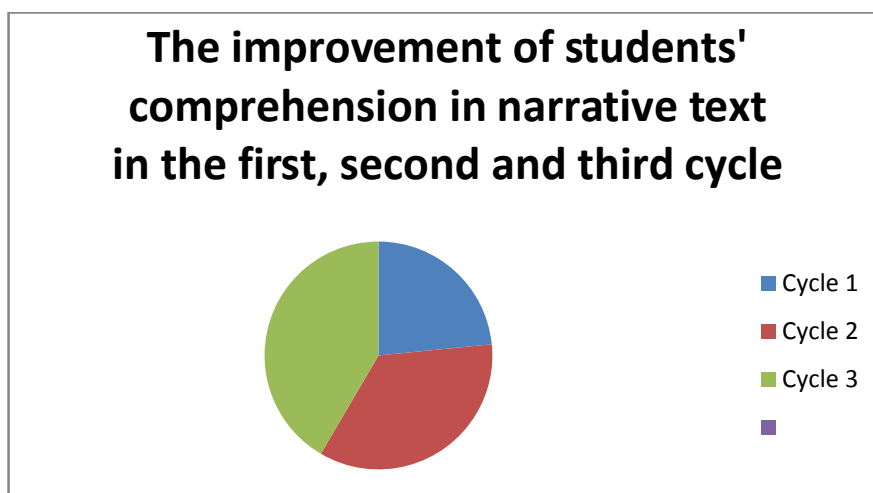
Besides, there were many benefits of story pyramid strategy: This method of critical reading is beneficial to all students, particularly those with learning disabilities that faced difficulties in attention, comprehension, analysis, and retention. Students with such disabilities could benefit from the method's support and guidance, while ensuring they grasp both specific details and the "big picture". Story pyramids forced students to read an assigned story, comprehended the story enough to formulate key words for each line, and also to use critical thinking to be succinct and concise while still getting their point across. The flexibility of this method allows it to be used at an individual level, for students who preferred to work on their own, at a group level, for those who preferred to work with classmates, or with the classroom as a whole.

Furthermore, the information required for each line can vary based on assignment or subject, and can be expanded for using with a story as a whole (as shown above) or condensed to be conflict, relationship, or specific character. For example: the teacher read the information requested and asked the students to answer it. For the first line, write the name of the main character of the story. Then, some students mentioned the name of main character (Ruai Bird) and the teacher wrote it on the blackboard. So, the other students who did not know the main character before became know the name of main character of the story. Then, the teacher read the information requested for the second line; two words described main character (kindest, beautiful). Some students tried to describe of main character and the teacher help them while write it on the blackboard. So, all of the students knew about it.

However, there were also some weaknesses of this strategy. This strategy need to be explained by the teacher clearly. If the teacher did not explain it clearly, the students would get confused. This strategy only use information requested. The information requested was not enough to guide the students to fill in the story

pyramid. So, the teacher used guided question to help them fill in the story pyramid. To fill in the story pyramid for each line, the students had to fill in the story pyramid by limited number of words, but they could not do it well. So, the teacher used jumble words to help them to fill in the story pyramid by limited number of words.

To see students' mean score in each cycle, it could be described in the diagram bellow:



From the diagram, it was observable that the students' reading comprehension is improved. It showed that the mean score in the last cycle increased. This point indicated that the students' reading comprehension was getting better.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

### Conclusion

Based on research finding and discussions, it could be concluded that students' reading comprehension on narrative text by story pyramid strategy was improved. The improvement of students could be seen from the first to the third cycle.

The students could find out the factual or detail information on orientation, complication and resolution and also understood language feature on narrative text by filling in the story pyramid. In the first cycle, students just filled in the story pyramid by the instruction information from story pyramid itself. But to get the information of the text, teacher prepared table and distributed it to them. After that, they did the

exercise by filling in the story pyramid by information instruction of story pyramid itself. In this cycle, students find the difficulty to fill in the story pyramid correctly because of that most of them got low score. It was not satisfied. The mean score of orientation was 16.8, complication was 20.5 and resolution was 7.5. The result of the first meeting on the first cycle was not good. Based on that result, the teacher and the collaborator combined guided question and story pyramid strategy to comprehend the text in the second cycle. The students' mean score of orientation in this cycle was 20.8, complication was 35.5 and resolution was 11 and the student's score on this cycle was 67.1. It was enough satisfied. The score also reach the standard of success point, because the standard of success point in that school was 65. But in this cycle still many students could not fill in the story pyramid by limited number of words correctly. So, both the teacher and the collaborator still need to have strategy that could help the students fill in the story pyramid in the third cycle. That was why they combined among story pyramid strategy, guided questions and jumbled words. After using the three combined strategy, the students' score increased and most of the students filled in the story pyramid by limited number of words correctly. The students' mean score of orientation in this cycle was 22.5, complication was 45.5 and resolution was 13.3 and the student's score on this cycle was 79.8. It was satisfied.

### **Suggestions**

In this case, the write suggested something to improve the teaching learning activity especially in teaching reading comprehension on narrative text. The suggestions are as follows: 1.) In order to have better result in teaching reading comprehension through story pyramid strategy, the teacher should not only use information requested of story pyramid but the teacher should use guided questions to help the students more understand to fill in the story pyramid each line. 2.) In teaching reading comprehension through story pyramid strategy, the teacher should use jumbled words to help the students fill in the story pyramid by limited number of words.

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